

## Message Text

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15

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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R 261328Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 859

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 0406

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PROP, PINS, CVIS, BU

SUBJECT: PROPOSED CALL ON PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV

REF: (A) SOFIA 2059; (B) SOFIA 2811

1. UNLESS DEPARTMENT HAS OBJECTION I INTEND TO REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV PRIOR TO MY DEPARTURE ON HOME LEAVE. IT IS NOT CERTAIN THAT IT WILL BE GRANTED IN VIEW OF THE CURRENT FLURRY OF ACTIVITY LEADING UP TO THE XI PARTY CONGRESS WHICH BEGINS MARCH 29. IF I DO NOT GET AN APPOINTMENT WITH ZHIVKOV, I WOULD TRY TO SEE PRIME MINISTER TODOROV TO GET ACROSS A FEW POINTS THAT ARE LESS EFFECTIVELY MADE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND TO OBTAIN HIGHER-LEVEL BULGARIAN VIEWS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RELATIONS.

2. TO SET THE STAGE, I WOULD BEGIN BY EXPRESSING PLEASURE AT DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RELATIONS IN GENERAL, NOTING THAT WHILE THEY ARE NOT YET FULLY NORMALIZED WE HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS; REFER TO CSCE AND THE USEFUL REVIEW WITH MLADENOV DECEMBER 29 (REF B); TALK ABOUT CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORTS UNDERWAY SUCH AS CULTURAL-SCIENTIFIC AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS, OUR PROPOSAL ON RESTRICTED AREAS, CERTAIN ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS PROJECTS OF MUTUAL ADVANTAGE, ETC. I WOULD THEN TURN TO THE FOLLOWING POINTS WHICH ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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THE MAJOR REASONS FOR THE EXERCISE:

A. DIVIDED FAMILIES: IN VIEW OF PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV'S POSITION AS PARTY LEADER AND HEAD OF STATE, WE TAKE WITH UTMOST SERIOUSNESS WHAT HE SAYS TO AMERICAN OFFICIALS. WE HAD THUS BEEN BOTH IMPRESSED AND HEARTENED BY THE POSITIVE AND STATESMANLIKE POSITION HE TOOK IN GIVING DEPUTY SECRETARY INGERSOLL TO UNDERSTAND LAST SEPTEMBER THAT DIVIDED FAMILY PROBLEM WOULD BE CLEARED UP IN SHORT ORDER. THEREFORE WE FIND IT VERY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY THIS POLITICAL DECISION TO REMOVE AN IMPORTANT IRRITANT IN OUR RELATIONS HAS NOT BEEN FOLLOWED BY EXPEDITIOUS ACTION. THERE HAVE BEEN A SMALL HANDFUL OF POSITIVE DISPOSITIONS (LESS THAN HALF A DOZEN) BUT THE MAJORITY OF CASES ARE BOGGED DOWN IN THE BUREAUCRACY.

B. MEDIA CRITICISM: IN THIS AREA TOO, PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV'S STATEMENT TO DEPUTY SECRETARY THAT MEDIA CRITICISM OF US WILL BE MODERATED WAS TAKEN VERY SERIOUSLY AS A STATESMANLIKE DECISION TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS. YET WE HAVE NOTED NO CHANGE IN THE TONE OF EITHER PRESS OR TV SINCE THAT STATEMENT. IN FACT, THE DIRECTOR OF BULGARIAN TELEVISION TOLD ME RECENTLY THAT HE HAD NEVER HEARD OF PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV'S ASSURANCES TO MR. INGERSOLL AND HAD RECEIVED NO DIRECTIVE TO GIVE IT EFFECT. IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY WORD HAS NOT YET BEEN PASSED TO THE MEDIA THEMSELVES.

C. COLLINS CASE: I WOULD CONFINE MEAT OF THE CONVERSATION TO THE TWO POINTS ABOVE, BUT IF ATMOSPHERE APPEARS PROPITIOUS I WOULD RAISE THE COLLINS CASE AS PERHAPS NOT IMPORTANT IN ITSELF BUT AS "INCOMPREHENSIBLE" TO THOSE WHO WISH TO ADVANCE OUR MUTUAL RELATIONS. TO ISSUE A PASSPORT AND EXIT VISA TO THE BULGARIAN WIFE OF AN AMERICAN CITIZEN--WHO MARRIED HIM WITH OFFICIAL GOB PERMISSION--AND THEN TAKE DOCUMENTS BACK AND SAY SHE CANNOT LEAVE BULGARIA, AND TO GIVE NEITHER THE

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EMBASSY (WHICH HAS MADE MANY REPRESENTATIONS) NOR MRS. COLLINS ANY REASON FOR THIS ACTION, APPEARS HEARTLESS AND ARBITRARY AND NOT IN KEEPING WITH PROVISIONS OF FINAL ACT OF HELSINKI.

3. REQUEST ANY DEPT COMMENTS BY MARCH 2 IF POSSIBLE.  
HERZ

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FOREIGN RELATIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, PARTY MEETINGS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 26 FEB 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ullricre  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976SOFIA00406  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760074-0481  
**From:** SOFIA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760210/aaaaahqr.tel  
**Line Count:** 114  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION SS  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** 76 SOFIA 2059, 76 SOFIA 2811  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ullricre  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 09 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <09 APR 2004 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <30 JUL 2004 by ullricre>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PROPOSED CALL ON PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PROP, PINS, CVIS, BU, (ZHIVKOV, TODOR)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006